



Montana

Department of Labor and Industry

Commissioner's Office

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

REGIONAL UNEMPLOYMENT REMAINS BELOW NATIONAL AVERAGE

HELENA, Mont. --- The seasonally adjusted unemployment rate for Montana was 2.7% in January, dropping 0.2% from the previous month. Though the overall rate moved downward, it did not signal a significant shift. Unemployment rates for other regional states showed North Dakota at 3.2%, South Dakota at 3.3%, Wyoming at 2.6%, and Idaho at 3.0%. The national unemployment rate was 4.6%.

“It’s become a talent war in Montana’s tight labor market,” said Labor Commissioner Keith Kelly. “Although the market has assisted in placing upward pressure on wages, labor force shortages are resulting in a lack of qualified applicants for entry-level positions.”

Statewide seasonally adjusted employment stood at 438,200 total workers in January. Nationally, prices increased 0.2% between December and January according to the Consumer Price Index. Total U.S. non-farm employment grew by 111,000 over the month, which was equal to a change of 0.08%.

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**Unemployment figures are seasonally-adjusted. Seasonally-adjusted numbers remove the effects of events that follow a more or less regular month-to-month pattern each year. These adjustments make nonseasonal patterns easier to identify. The margin of error for the unemployment rate is plus or minus 0.8 percentage points at the 90 percent confidence level. All questions relating to the calculation of unemployment rates should be directed to Tyler Turner, Economist with the Montana Department of Labor and Industry's Research and Analysis Bureau.*

The February 2007 Labor Situation Report will be released Friday March 30th, 2007

******* INFORMATION AVAILABLE ON THE INTERNET *******

Monthly labor force information for Montana counties is available at:

<http://www.ourfactsyourfuture.org/cgi/dataanalysis/?PAGEID=94&SUBID=205>

Monthly Montana industry employment information is available at:

<http://www.ourfactsyourfuture.org/cgi/dataanalysis/?PAGEID=94&SUBID=199>

Annual labor force data for Indian Reservations in Montana is available at:

www.ourfactsyourfuture.org/?PAGEID=67&SUBID=121